CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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CANADA

WORKING PAPER CONCERNING CD ACTION ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Canada proposes that

- the CD establish an Ad Hoc Committee for the substantive discussion of nuclear disarmament issues with a view to identifying if and when one or more such issues might be negotiated multilaterally.

BACKGROUND

- Nuclear disarmament issues continues to be a primary and priority preoccupation of the global community.

- While the Nuclear Weapon States have particular responsibility on nuclear disarmament issues, and thus have specific contributions to make, other members of the international community have both stakes and interests with regard to these issues.

- The CD, as the multilateral negotiating mechanism on disarmament issues, should be appropriately and substantively engaged on nuclear disarmament issues.

- That being said, Canada does not consider that the CD should be mandated to negotiate nuclear weapon reduction per se or specific operational issues concerning such weapons.

- But the CD should respond to the broad multilateral desire to support, as appropriate, Nuclear Weapon States' efforts in the disarmament field; to be more aware of issues and developments; and, to express views on developments.

- More directly, the CD should and could be used to identify and explore issues which could be negotiated at an appropriate point by a multilateral mechanism.

- The CD has negotiated such an issue, i.e. the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, in the recent past; Canada continues to consider that the CD could make a further contribution by the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

- Other issues appropriate for negotiation in the CD may well emerge in the future, not least of all as the result of substantive discussions on general nuclear disarmament issues and developments in that body.

- Canada's current suggestion along these lines was made last year as a part of the ideas proposed, inter alia, in CD/1456.

- While Canada considers that such an Ad Hoc Committee with such a mandate could and should be established now, this does not preclude the CD establishing another mechanism or process to fulfil such a mandate.